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UNCLAS OTTAWA 001155

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WGSARS, OES/PCI, WHA/CAN (RUNNING)

HHS FOR OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, OFFICE OF
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (STEIGER)

CDC for Global Health Office (Cox)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [CA](#) [SARS](#)

SUBJECT: WGSARS: Canada-wide Status Report April 24
(Number 6)

Ref. (A) Ottawa 1139 (SARS Canada-wide Report #5)

(B) Toronto 1185(Ontario SARS Update #16)

1. The WHO Travel Advisory released on April 23 that recommended against travel to Toronto precipitated vigorous dissent from the Federal Health Minister Anne McLellan, from Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman and from provincial and federal public health officials (ref B). Deputy Prime Minister John Manley described the WHO advisory as "unwarranted", although Prime Minister Chretien has not joined the fray as he is out of the country on vacation. On April 23 Health Canada sent WHO a letter which formally challenged the WHO Travel Advisory decision.

2. Meanwhile, for a brief period on April 23 the Minister of Health of the province of Nova Scotia, in an address to members of the provincial legislature urged residents of that province to heed the WHO travel advice and avoid travel to Toronto. The Nova Scotian Minister back-tracked after several hours.

3. As of 13:00 Eastern Daylight Saving Time, April 22, 2003 Health Canada has received reports of 324 probable or suspect cases of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in Canada. To date, transmission has been limited to specific transmission settings such as households, hospitals and specific community settings. The details of the cases to date are as follows:

-- Ontario is reporting 136 probable and 125 suspect cases. This is an increase of 1 probable and 1 suspect case since Report #5. (See Toronto reporting for greater detail. All the 15 Canadian deaths have been linked to the Toronto nexus, 14 probable cases and 1 suspected case.)

-- British Columbia is reporting 4 probable and 47 suspect cases. This is an increase of 6 suspect cases since Report #5., see also paragraph 4.

-- New Brunswick is reporting 2 suspect cases. (No change.)

-- Saskatchewan is reporting 1 suspect case. (No change.)

-- Alberta is reporting 5 suspect cases. (No change)

-- Prince Edward Island is reporting 4 suspect cases. (No change.)

4. According to Press reports, Public Health officials in British Columbia are attempting to locate passengers who arrived in Vancouver on April 19 on a China Airlines flight from New Delhi, India, via Taipei, Taiwan. Eight of the passengers have subsequently developed symptoms of SARS. The flight may have carried as many as 250 passengers. Of the passengers who have developed signs of SARS, a two-year-old girl and an adult have been hospitalized while the other six remain in home isolation.

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